

EXHIBIT 7

Letters of recommendation

5327 Revere Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38120

August 8, 2021

The Honorable John T. Fowlkes, Jr.
United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee

Clifford Davis and Odell Horton
Federal Building
167 North Main Street
Memphis, Tennessee 38103

Re: George Skouteris

Dear Judge Fowlkes,

I am writing this letter on behalf of George Skouteris, whom I have personally know for almost ten years. We attend church together, including men's groups, small groups, and numerous church activities. George is dedicated to his faith and is well-respected and appreciated by our church community. He is always willing to go above and beyond to help those in need.

George is also my dear friend. I sincerely respect him and his desire to repent for the crimes he has committed. He has confessed his wrongdoings and continues to humbly work every day to improve the lives of those around him. He is selfless in his service to his church, his friends, and his family.

George's family love him unconditionally. George has two stepdaughters, one in high school and one in college. These girls need the strong, positive, and nurturing influence of their stepfather in these most impressionable times of their lives. George knows he has made bad decisions, and he earnestly regrets these decisions. But he is a *changed man*. He is anxious to pay his debt to society and to continue to build upon the positive impact he has on his community. If given the chance, George Skouteris will prove that he is a valuable and integral individual in our city.

Additionally, in the light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the recent surge of the Delta variant, placing George in a densely populated federal prison would not only destabilize his life and the lives of his family, but it would also negatively impact George's ability to continue producing positive change in our community.

Simply put, George Skouteris is a changed man. I am asking you to allow him to continue all the good he does daily for our community. I appreciate your time in reading this letter about George Skouteris. I pray that you will have mercy in his sentencing.

Respectfully,

Jere W. Bowden

Dear Judge Fowlkes,

I am writing this letter to attest to the character of George Skontaris. I have been friends with George for over a decade and my husband has known him since their high school days. We can honestly say, without hesitation, George is one of the kindest and most humble men we know. His positive influence is subtle yet significant to all who know him... his wife, his family, his friends, and his church.

When George married his wife, he took on the role of stepfather to her two girls. I doubt there has ever been a more loving and devoted stepfather than he is to these precious children. They adore him and are completely devastated at the possibility of losing his constant presence in their lives. His love and guidance for his family has been a beautiful

and inspirational thing to witness.

Our church family also depends greatly on George and his ever-kind spirit. He is the first to volunteer his time and kindness to those in need. We pray sincerely that George may be spared being separated from us.

My husband and I have spent countless days with the Skouteris family over the years. Not once have we heard George speak ill or disparagingly about anyone. Ever. We have experienced nothing but loyalty, generosity, humility, and love.

We treasure our friendship with George and know that it will remain one of our life's greatest blessings. He is a good man and a tremendous benefit to society.

If there is ever a time to consider mercy, please let it be with our friend, George.

Respectfully yours,
Kathy and Don Johnson



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July 26, 2021

The Honorable John T Fowlkes
United States District Judge for the
Western District of Tennessee

Re: George Skouteris

Dear Judge Fowlkes,

My name is Jim Walker and I have lived in Memphis for 60 years. I serve on the Memphis Shelby County Law Enforcement Board, not that that position makes me an expert on all the tough choices faced by those truly involved in the Criminal Justice System, but it does make me a witness to the numerous factors one who sits in your position must consider in performing your duties. My understanding is that the System is set up to accomplish two major goals, first to protecting the community it serves by punishing deliberate violators of the law as a deterrent for others who might consider similar actions, and secondly to return those who have been found guilty back to productive citizens after they been punished for their violation.

I have known who George was since grade school, admired him for who he was and how he stood out among our peers as someone who generally loved people and people loved him for it. I have only truly become a close friend after his world fell apart and he was disbarred. We started going to Christ Community Church where George and his family were members and that's where our real friendship began. George was in the middle of starting over trying to recover from a brutal divorce and trying to build a new career after losing his law license.

George's attitude throughout our friendship has been that he made mistakes, didn't handle the pressure of his divorce well and it cost him what was important to him. He was broken, starting over and confessed to all he knew that this was his failure that led to his current situation. He has spent the last ten years rebuilding his life. He remarried and became a husband and father to two girls whose own lives had been shattered by their father. He got a job, started over by working for a company which the owner decided to move from Memphis, turned the business over to George. George now owns an employee drug testing business.

I respectfully ask you consider the following factors when sentencing George:

- 1) The loss of George's license, reputation and family has been a tremendous punishment and will serve as a deterrent for every attorney who finds themselves under tremendous pressure.
- 2) That the length of time it has taken since his crime to get before your Court makes it difficult for the System to accomplish its second goal of returning those who have been found guilty back to productive citizens. This is not a fault of your Court, but the length of time it took the prosecutors to indict George and then the time it took to get to your court because of COVID. If George goes to prison it has been more than ten years since his crime, he will lose his new career and certainly elements of his family will never be the same. George is almost 60, it was one thing to start over when he was in his 40's but to start over when he is over 60 will be difficult. He will mostly likely not be able to earn a living and pay taxes, he will be eligible to collect social security. This outcome is not only unfortunate to George and his family, but a cost to society for no clear benefit.

I appreciate your willingness to consider my thoughts, I feel that George has a lot to contribute to our community. He had a dark period in his life that hurt people who trusted him, but the majority of his life he has contributed to the overall good of life in Memphis. I pray that he will be allowed to continue to atone for his mistakes by serving our community by being a working member of the community.

Respectfully,


Jim Walker

**SEEK THE PEACE &
PROSPERITY OF MEMPHIS**

Stefan D. Gertsch
2470 Birnam Wood Dr
Germantown, TN 38138

July 25, 2021

The Honorable John T. Fowlkes, Jr.
United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee

Re: George E. Skouteris

Dear Judge Fowlkes:

Please allow me to briefly introduce myself. My name is Stefan D. Gertsch and I am a 40 year old Swiss-American, who immigrated to the United States in 2006 and has lived in the Greater Memphis area ever since. I have been married for 10 years and my wife Isabella and I have two children, Marco (5) and Vincent (2). I work as a financial advisor for UBS Financial Services Inc. I am very grateful for all the opportunities I have been given in the United States. I work hard to be a productive member of society and encourage those around me to do the same.

George and I have known each other for about two years. We both attend the same Bible study group for men that meets weekly on Wednesday mornings. It is a small group of typically about 7 men, so we have gotten to know each other well in the past two years. I have benefited greatly from being around George in many ways. His kindness and humility strike me as being exemplary. I know him to be an honest, hardworking, and loving family man.

I understand that George has been convicted in a scheme to defraud clients and is awaiting sentencing. I am writing to you to request leniency in his sentencing for the following reasons:

- 1) I know that George deeply regrets ever having done something illegal.
- 2) I believe that time in prison would put his wife and family in real hardship.
- 3) I am convinced that George has changed, and society is better served by having George continue to be a productive member of it rather than having him spend time in prison.

Respectfully yours,



Stefan D. Gertsch